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## Bob Shallit: Sacramento thrown to 'sharks' on reality TV

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You can't buy publicity like this.

Sacramentan Paul Watts, founder of Graffiti Removal Services, is slated to get national exposure later this month when he appears on ABC's "Shark Tank."

The new, weekly reality show has entrepreneurs pitching their business ideas to five wealthy venture capitalists – the "sharks" – who end up either investing in the startup companies or ridiculing their founders.

Most often, it's the latter.

Watts, who launched his Citrus Heights company full time in 2005 and now is looking to franchise it nationally, was recruited to be a contestant a couple of months ago.

He was asked to fill out a 50-page application and make a five-minute video about his business.

Then, earlier this month, the 42-year-old drove down to L.A., did an audition – and was thrown to the sharks.

He can't say how his segment went; you'll have to watch Channel 10 (KXTV) at 9 p.m. on Aug. 30 to find out.

But he does report that the give and take with the five VCs got "very heated" – perhaps over the issue of how much equity he'd be willing to give up in exchange for the capital he seeks.

Says Watts, "It will make for great TV."

### Hammer time

Old Sacramento's most conspicuous hole in the ground is finally getting filled.

Foundation work began last week at the former sites of the side-by-side Ebner and Empire hotels on K street between Second and Front.

A historic replica of the 1850s-era buildings should be completed and ready for leasing in a year, says Dave Scurfield, part of the project development team.

Planned uses include basement parking, ground-floor retail and two stories of office space.

"This isn't the most ideal time to start a project," Scurfield says in reference to the slow

economy. "But we felt we had an obligation to get started."

Plans for the site have been in the works for decades. One earlier development group hoped to restore the Ebner, but that didn't prove feasible and it was leveled in 2003, leaving a gaping hole on one of Old Sac's most vibrant blocks.

The current development team – which includes Johan Otto, Steve Ayers and Ben Mortel as well as Scurfield – faced several delays before finally getting under way on the \$6 million project, financed in part with redevelopment money.

Scurfield, whose father developed sites in the area, says it's rewarding to "make a contribution to getting Old Sacramento finished and having an investment in my old backyard."

## **Eat, drink, shop**

Speaking of Old Sac, Lloyd Harvego is planning a late October opening of Ten22, a casual eatery in the ground floor of his Orleans apartment complex on Second Street.

Harvego says the eatery, with 190 seats inside and 100 on a back patio, will target business people, tourists and families with lower price points than his nearby Firehouse Restaurant.

"We're concentrating on making it open, light and people friendly," Harvego says of the new place.

Also planned: an in-restaurant shop selling wine, gourmet oils and sauces and take-out meals.

As for the 24 loft apartments above the future eatery, Harvego reports he now has 18 tenants – most of them single professionals who work downtown.

"We're close to getting an additional one (tenant) per month," he says, "so we could be leased up by the end of the year."

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